

IN THE CLAIMS

Recitation of all pending claims is provided for reference convenience.

1. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A license devolution apparatus, comprising:
storage medium accessing means for accessing a first storage medium storing contents encrypted with a predetermined key, storing a first media ID identifying the first storage medium, and storing a first encryption secure information generated by encrypting the key and a first license information that represents a right to use the contents, together with one another or individually, with the first media ID, and accessing a second storage medium storing a second media ID identifying the second storage medium;

decoding means for decoding the first encryption secure information stored in said first storage medium by reading the first media ID and using the first media ID to obtain the key and the first license information; and

encryption means for reading the second media ID and encrypting the key and a second license information that represents a second right to use the contents devolved from the first license information stored on the first storage medium by passing down the first license information of the first storage medium to the second storage medium as a successor of the first storage medium and degenerating the first license information in the first storage medium, together with one another or individually, with the read second media ID, to generate a second encryption secure information with the second media ID for storage in said second storage medium.

2. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A license devolution apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said encryption means degenerates the first license information by encrypting with the first media ID a third license information, obtained through subtracting the second license information from the first license information, or encrypts with the first media ID both the key and a third right of using, to generate a third encryption secure information and stores the third encryption secure information in the first storage medium.

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A license devolution apparatus according to claim 1, wherein if the entire rights of using the contents, to which the first storage medium is entitled, are devolved to the second storage medium, the first encryption secure information stored in the first storage medium is destroyed.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A license devolution apparatus according to claim 1, wherein before devolution of the right to use contents, the first storage medium stores contents whose right to use is intended to be devolved as encrypted contents, and

wherein said license devolution apparatus further comprises contents transfer means for reading the encrypted contents from the first storage medium, and storing in the second storage medium the read encrypted contents.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A license devolution apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the first license information and the second license information represent the presence of the right to use, and the third license information represents the absence of the right to use.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A license devolution apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the first license information represents a first available number of times or available time, the second license information represents a second available number of times or available time which is less than the first available number of times or available time, and the third license information represents a third available number of times or available time which is obtained through subtracting the second available number of times or available time from the first available number of times or available time.

7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A license devolution apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the first and second storage media form a composite storage unit, the composite storage unit further comprising a first drive and a second drive driving the first storage medium and the second storage medium, respectively, said first drive and said second drive having a first firmware and second firmware accessing the first storage medium and the second storage medium, respectively,

wherein said decoding means and said encryption means are arranged as a composite unit firmware including said first firmware and said second firmware; and

wherein only said first firmware has authority to access the first storage medium driven by said first drive, and only said second firmware has authority to access the second storage medium driven by said second drive.

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A license devolution method, comprising:
storing in a first storage medium contents encrypted with a predetermined key, a first media ID identifying the first storage medium, and encryption secure information generated by encrypting with the first media ID, the key and a first license information, which represents a right to use the contents;

decoding the first encryption secure information by reading the first media ID and using the first media ID to obtain the key and the first license information;

generating a second encryption secure information by reading a second media ID identifying a second storage medium and encrypting with the read second media ID, the key and a second license information, which represents a second right to use the contents that is devolved from the first license information stored on the first storage medium by passing down the first license information of the first storage medium to the second storage medium as a successor of the first storage medium and degenerating the first license information in the first storage medium; and

storing the second encryption secure information in said second storage medium, wherein the right to use the contents stored in the first storage medium is devolved from the first storage medium to the second storage medium.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A license devolution system in communication with computer readable storages, comprising:

an access unit accessing a first storage unit having a first storage ID and storing contents encrypted with a predetermined key, and storing a first encryption secure information generated by encrypting the key and a first license information that represents a right to use the contents, with the first storage ID, and accessing a second storage unit having a second storage ID identifying the second storage unit;

a decoder decoding the first encryption secure information stored in said first storage unit by reading the first storage ID and using the first storage ID to obtain the key and the first license information;

a devolving unit devolving the right to use the contents of the first storage unit to the second storage unit by generating a second license information that represents a second right to use the contents devolved from the first license information stored on the first storage unit by passing down the first license information of the first storage medium to the second storage medium as a successor of the first storage medium and degenerating the first license information in the first storage medium; and

an encryption unit reading the second storage ID, and encrypting the key and the second use information with the read second storage ID to generate a second encryption secure information stored in said second storage unit.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A license devolution computer, comprising:
a composite storage unit comprising a first storage unit, a second storage unit, and a composite storage access unit accessing the first storage unit having a first storage ID and storing contents encrypted with a predetermined key and storing a first encryption secure information generated by encrypting the key and a first license information, which represents a right to use the contents, with the first storage ID, and accessing the second storage unit having a second storage ID identifying the second storage unit, the composite storage access unit comprising:

a decoder decoding the first encryption secure information stored in said first storage unit by reading the first storage ID and using the first storage ID to obtain the key and the first license information; and

a devolving unit reading the second storage ID and devolving the right to use the contents of the first storage unit to the second storage unit by generating a second license information, which represents a second right to use the contents devolved from the first license information stored on the first storage unit by passing down the first license information of the first storage medium to the second storage medium as a successor of the first storage medium and reducing the first license information in the first storage medium according to the passing down, and encrypting the key and the second use information with the second storage ID to generate a second encryption secure information stored in said second storage unit.